

Assemblymember Christine Kehoe Brings You News

November 20, 2002

Saving Tax Dollars

The State Budget is again out of balance and lawmakers are faced with difficult fiscal and policy decisions involving cuts in services and increasing revenues. Reducing government costs and making services more easily accessible is essential now more than ever.

On January 1, 2003, AB 2929, the bill I authored to streamline overpaid benefit collection efforts at the Employment Development Department, will go into effect. This streamlining will reduce program costs and reduce fees paid by the unemployed. This will result in combined fee reduction and cost savings of approximately \$1 million per year. This cost saving legislation was sponsored by Governor Davis and received bipartisan support in both the Assembly and the Senate.

To read the text of the bill, go to <http://www.leginfo.ca.gov/bilinfo.html> and search for AB 2929.

Who Watches the State?

The Bureau of State Audits serves as a watchdog to ensure the effective and efficient administration and management of public funds and programs. It is their job to help make sure that California government stays one step ahead. As the State's independent external auditor, they provide independent, nonpartisan, accurate, and timely assessments of California government's financial and operational activities in compliance with generally accepted government auditing standards. Latest reports include:

- **Investigations of Improper Activities of State Employees**
- **California's Charter Schools** – Oversight at All Levels Could be Stronger to Ensure Charter Schools' Accountability
- **Office of Criminal Justice Planning** – Experiences problems in program administration, and Alternative Administration Structures for the Domestic Violence Program might improve program delivery.
- **Department of Rehabilitation** – Its delay in correcting known weaknesses has limited the success of the Business Enterprise Program for the Blind.

These reports and others are now available on their Web site at <http://www.bsa.ca.gov/bsa>.

Buckle up for the Holidays

Thanksgiving week is one of the busiest travel times of the year, and law enforcement works overtime during the holidays to ensure our safety on the roads. This year, with fewer people flying and more people driving to their holiday destinations, law enforcement will be even more vigilant. Thanks to them -- and to safe drivers -- more families will make it home safely to share the joy of the holidays with their families.

"Buckle Up America" is a national movement to increase seat belt use to 90 percent and reduce motor vehicle-related child fatalities by 25 percent by the year 2005 -- and we are well on our way to achieving those goals. According to "Buckle Up America" fatalities from motor vehicle-related injuries decreased by at least 12.3 percent between 1996, when "Operation ABC Mobilization" began, and the year 2000. During that same period, child restraint use among toddlers increased 30 percent. Almost 90 percent of toddlers now ride in vehicle safety restraints, and the use of seat belts for children aged five to 15 has increased almost 75 percent.

Overall, 20 million more Americans buckled up in 2001. If these millions of people continue to use seat belts and safety seats, an estimated 1,500 lives will be saved each year, thanks to the efforts of law enforcement and dedicated child safety supporters. Just think how many more lives could be saved if everyone got involved in "Operation ABC Mobilization."

For information on the "Buckle Up America" program, go to their website at <http://www.buckleupamerica.org/>. For more information on the Operation ABC Mobilization program, go to <http://www.nsc.org/airbag.htm>.

A Virtual Visit to the California State Capitol Museum

California's State Capitol is both a beautiful historic public building and the place where California's governing bodies do the people's business. The California State Capitol Museum's website is designed to use modern technology to bring you closer to your Capitol and the lawmakers who serve you. The website will help virtual visitors discover California's past, present, and future 'under the dome'.

Please visit the museum website at <http://statecapitolmuseum.ca.gov/>.

For California State Capitol Museum information by CD-ROM, please feel free to contact my office at (619) 294-7600.

You may be richer than you think

The State of California is holding over \$2.9 billion in Unclaimed Property. These assets have been turned over to the State for safekeeping by businesses and other organizations as required by law.

There is no charge to file a claim for Unclaimed Property. During the last state fiscal year, over 203,000 accounts, valued at \$200 million, were claimed by their rightful owners.

Go to the State of California's Unclaimed Property (UCP) Program Web site, available at <http://www.sco.ca.gov/col/ucpl/>, to search for property you may have lost or forgotten.

LGBT Caucus Reception

On December 2, 2002 State officials will be sworn into public office. On this day the LGBT Caucus will host a welcoming reception in Sacramento. California is the first state to create a full-time lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender legislative caucus. For more information, please call my office at 619-294-7600.

Free Brochures available from the Kehoe Library

I have a variety of free brochures available to you. Email me at Assemblymember.Kehoe@assembly.ca.gov to get a listing of our brochures and have some sent to you.

- "Senior Resources and Services Guide"
- "Operation Kid Print"
- "Preventing Birth Defects"
- "Bicycle Safety"
- "Landlord/Tenant Guide"
- "California Boating Guide"
- "A Citizen's Guide to Participation"
- "Visit the California State Assembly on the Internet"
- "How to Lobby the California State Legislature"
- "California State Capitol – Your Connection"
- "Your HMO Rights and Responsibilities"